

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ABU DH 00783 231026Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 /019 W
-----100420 232141Z /70
R 230950Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7556
INFO USDOC

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 0783

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, TC
SUBJECT: TEXAS STATE INQUIRY RE STATE SPONSORED TRADE MISSION
TO UAE

REF: STATE 068538

1. SUMMARY: POST WOULD WELCOME WELL ORGANIZED, STATE-SUPPORTED, HORIZONTAL TRADE MISSION ALONG LINES PARA 2 WHICH WOULD VISIT SEVERAL MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT UAE MARKET ALONE IS SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY TRIP. IF UAE INCLUDED RECOMMEND MISSION SCHEDULE TWO WORKING DAYS EACH IN ABU DHABI AND DUBAI. NO MISSION SHOULD COME WITHOUT SUFFICIENT PREPARATION BY ADVANCE MAN. AS LITTLE BUSINESS IS DONE DURING SUMMER, TEXAS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT POST'S CONSIDERED BELIEF IS THAT MULTI-DESTINATION TRIP IN FALL IS MORE PRACTICAL. LOCAL PROGENITOR MILROY IS TOO RECENTLY ESTABLISHED TO PERMIT US TO PASS JUDGEMENT ON HIS QUALIFICATIONS AS EFFECTIVE LOCAL CONTACT FOR TEXAS.: END SUMMARY.

2. POST HAS BEEN CONTACT WITH MILROY RE POSSIBLE TRADE MISSION FOR ABOUT ONE MONTH. WE HAVE OFFERED TO PROVIDE SUPPORT WE WOULD GIVE TO ANY VISITING TRADE MISSION OR GROUP OF BUSINESSMEN. ACCORDING TO MILROY, HE MENTIONED IT TO SOME ABU DHABI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERS BUT MILROY HAS NOT ESTABLISHED CONTACT WITH THE CHAMBER OFFICE THAT HANDLES TRADE GROUPS.

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PAGE 02 ABU DH 00783 231026Z

3. EMBASSY HAS COPY OF LETTER DATED FEB. 23 THAT MILROY SENT TO COL. HARVEY OF TEXAS INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION. LETTER LISTS 14 PRODUCT CATEGORIES MILROY WOULD LIKE TO SEE REPRESENTED IN MISSION. EMBASSY FEELS THAT OILFIELD EQUIPMENT, MARINE CRAFT, SMALL CONSTRUCTION MACHINERY, TOOLS AND AUTOMOTIVE MACHINERY WOULD GENERATE SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST HE. OTHER PRODUCTS APPEAR

MARGINAL. LETTER MAKES NO MENTION OF FOODSTUFFS OR CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND INCLUDES ONLY VERY LIMITED AMOUNT OF CONSUMER GOODS. IF MILROY HAS SUGGESTED OTHER ITEMS TO TIC, WE ARE NOT AWARE OF IT NOR WERE WE CONSULTED BEFORE LIST WAS DRAWN UP.

4. MECA (MARKETING ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS ASSOCIATES) WAS ESTABLISHED IN FEBRUARY, 1978 AND IS OWNED BY MILROY (40 PERCENT) AND MOHAMMED AL FENDI AL MAZROUI AND PERHAPS OTHER MEMBERS OF THE AL MAZROUI CLAN (60 PERCENT) WITH THE LATTER PROVIDING ALL THE CAPITAL. THE FIRM HAS A LOCAL LICENSE ONLY AS CONSULTANTS; IT CANNOT IMPORT OR RETAIL MERCHANDISE OR REPRESENT FOREIGN COMPANIES. BUSINESS ACTIVITIES ARE HANDLED BY OTHER FAMILY OWNED COMPANIES. THE AL MAZROUIS ARE A WELL CONNECTED FAMILY IN ABU DHABI BUT THE INFLUENCE OF THOSE MEMBERS SPECIFICALLY ASSOCIATED WITH MECA REMAINS TO BE DEMONSTRATED.

5. MECA ESTABLISHED A 51/49 PERCENT JOINT VENTURE WITH AN IMPORTANT US ENGINEERING FIRM, FORD, BACON, AND DAVIS, IN MID MARCH. ACCORDING TO MILROY, THE PARTNERSHIP IS ABOUT TO LAND SOME VERY SUBSTANTIAL ENGINEERING CONTRACTS FOR OILFIELD INSTALLATIONS. AS YET, THEY HAVE NOT BEEN AWARDED ANY JOBS BUT THIS IS NOT SURPRISING CONSIDERING HOW RECENTLY BOTH MECA AND THE JOINT VENTURE WERE FOUNDED.

6. EMBASSY HAS NOT SEEN ENOUGH OF MILROY/MECA TO ASSESS THEIR LIKELY SUCCESS (VOLUNTARY WTDR HAS BEEN INITIATED). IF HALF
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PAGE 03 ABU DH 00783 231026Z

OF THEIR PROPOSALS MATERILIZE, THEN MECA COULD BECOME AN IMPORTANT LOCAL FIRM AND A GOOD CONTACT FOR US BUSINESSMEN.
DICKMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ABUDH00783
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780129-0136
Format: TEL
From: ABU DHABI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780334/aaaabcpm.tel
Line Count: 97
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 2c451fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 68538
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3231647
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TEXAS STATE INQUIRY RE STATE SPONSORED TRADE MISSION TO UAE
TAGS: BEXP, TC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/2c451fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014